

Texas Geospatial Extension Program



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The Texas Geospatial Extension Program is part of the Texas A&M Institute of Renewable Natural Resources. The inception of the Texas program in 2004 was part of a grant from the USDA CSREES program to establish a Geospatial Extension Specialist (GES) as part of the national program (13 other states have a Geospatial Extension Specialist). The program is a partnership between the USDA, NASA, and NOAA to expand the knowledge and use of geospatial technologies in a scientific and practical manner utilizing the Extension outreach and education philosophy. Each state establishes Land Grant (Cooperative Extension), Space Grant, and Sea Grant partnerships along with other local partnerships to facilitate practical use of Earth systems science and technology.

Local partnerships between Texas A&M IRNR, the UT Center for Space Research, Texas Sea Grant, and the Texas Center for Space Research made the position possible. This partnership enables direct access to critical data and scientists as well as provides opportunities for liaison and partnerships between Land Grant, Sea Grant, and Space Grant.

The objectives of the program are to 1) actively support research and demonstration projects that utilize satellite imagery and other remotely sensed data to address natural resource management issues; 2) expand the workforce trained in geospatial technologies by training County Extension Agents and other Natural Resource professionals; 3) expand the existing system for transferring geospatial data to users at the local level; and 4) increase geospatial technology and natural resource literacy by developing school curriculum enrichment materials for teaching environmental systems.

Four Program Areas

1) Geospatial Technologies for Natural Resource Management

Support research, outreach, and education for the integration and use of geospatial technology related to the advancement of natural resource management. Projects target rangeland ecology restoration and management, invasive species monitoring and management, watershed management and restoration, and wildlife habitat management and enhancement.

2) Workforce Development and Training

Provide professional training opportunities in the advanced use of geospatial technologies. Provide opportunities for County Extension Agents (CEAs) and other natural resource professionals. Support and develop multi-state programs with National Geospatial Technology Extension Network (NGTEN) specialists.

3) Geospatial Data Accessibility

Promote access to geospatial data through the development of tools and technologies that provide platforms for public access to relevant data.

4) Geospatial Technology Literacy

Support the increasing need for geospatial technology literacy through k-16 curriculum development, educator resources, and continuing education opportunities for adults.

